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THE JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW

JULY, 1900

THE JEWISH SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE history of any living movement must record its beginning, its progress and its present condition, and it must outline the specific end toward which the moving tends. The exact beginning of the American Jewish Sunday schools is obscured by uncertainty and difference of opinion; regarding their present condition there is less uncertainty but a greater difference of opinion; but there is neither uncertainty nor difference of opinion as to the specific end towards which the movement is travelling. To aid in the development of a generation of better Jews and Jewesses, of better men and better women because better Jews and better Jewesses; to be a factor in producing a higher and truer Judaism; to teach children their obligations to God, to man and to the congregation; to implant in each childish heart a deep reverence for God and for his holy cause; these are what constitute the aim of the Jewish Sunday school, and surely herein there is room for neither uncertainty nor difference of opinion.

To properly discuss the subject it were best to view it in its three aspects of past, present and future. I have been at some pains to collect the data of the past; but unfortunately the earlier records of our older congregations

were often carelessly kept, and all that can be done is to narrate events exactly as they have been recorded, or as tradition has passed them down through two or three generations. And here I would gratefully acknowledge the help in this direction extended by Mr. Max J. Kohler, the Rev. Dr. H. Pereira Mendes, the Rev. Dr. A. S. Isaacs and the late Mr. Myer Stern, of New York City; Mrs. Dinkins, of Charleston, S. C., the Rev. E. N. Calisch, of Richmond, Va., and Dr. Lee K. Frankel, formerly of Philadelphia, all of whom supplied me with valuable material. Some of the facts here stated have been disputed; different cities lay claim to the honour of having established the first Jewish Sunday school; but wherever records exist of which copies could be made, I have merely inserted them, and hence disclaim all responsibility for their accuracy or inaccuracy. The past I give as I have found it; a mere statement of events, of small beginnings and developments, uncertain, crude and tentative. The present I shall portray as it appears to me, desiring to be absolutely fair, lauding where praise is due, condemning what seems blameworthy, and ready to assume complete responsibility for what is, after all, only my personal view of existing conditions. The future, alas! no gift of prophecy is mine, and at best, I can but sketch a Promised Land, one which I am well aware I shall probably not be permitted to enter. Yet perhaps the sketch may prove sufficiently attractive to lure others from the wilderness of mistakes in which they are sojourning, and to cause them to turn their faces towards the land within reach if not yet within sight. This is the hope in which I undertake my task of love as well as of duty, and even its partial realization will be one of the proudest achievements of my life.

THE PAST.

The American Jewish Sunday school, like every other phase of American Judaism, is partly a development and partly a compromise. Originally the *Cheder*, the school,

was an integral part of congregational life, and instruction in Torah, in Talmud and in secular branches was daily imparted. This for a time sufficed for the needs of the earliest American congregations, but under the influence of Western civilization it soon proved inefficient. The *Cheder* was unequal to satisfy the demand for a better and broader general education, and, as they prospered, members withdrew their sons from the congregational school (the daughters had rarely been admitted), sending them to secular schools and employing the rabbi or some other Hebrew scholar to give them, either at home or in small classes, private lessons in the Hebrew language. The eventual discontinuance of the school was the natural sequence.

This method, if not wholly satisfactory, at least was not entirely unsatisfactory, but it weighed heavily upon the poor man. To contribute his share to congregational support was at times a hardship; but to pay besides for private instruction in Hebrew for his children, and children were many in those days, was often beyond his means. Then, too, the girls, in most families, were wholly shut off from regular religious instruction; hence most of the American congregations soon established, in connexion with the synagogue, some sort of a school for the teaching of religion; but, with one or two notable exceptions, they admitted to them only the children of their own members. Children of parents who could not or would not join a congregation were thus entirely debarred from these advantages.

It was left for a woman, Miss Rebecca Gratz, of Philadelphia, to organize the first free school for the religious instruction of Jewish children, rich and poor alike. The following minute is taken from the records of the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society (of Philadelphia):—

“The Board met at Mrs. Hart’s, February 4, 1838.

“Resolved: That a Sunday school be established under the direction of the Board, and teachers appointed among the young ladies of the congregation (*Mickve Israel*).

Mrs. Allen, Mrs. R. Moss, Mrs. Hays and Miss Gratz were appointed a committee to procure a schoolroom ; Mrs. Allen, Mrs. R. Hart and Miss Gratz to procure books and make all necessary arrangements."

Little time was wasted in making arrangements, for the school opened four weeks later, on March 4, 1838, by a curious coincidence, the fifty-seventh anniversary of Miss Gratz's birthday. Miss Gratz became the superintendent, a position which she held until 1864, when, almost eighty-four years of age, she resigned, and was succeeded by Miss Louisa B. Hart. The first teachers in this school were Miss S. C. Peixotto, Miss M. G. Etting, the Misses Moses, Miss Louisa B. Hart, Miss R. Peso and Miss Ellen Phillips¹.

When the Sunday school opened it was discovered that there were no suitable text-books other than Leeser's translation of *Johlnson's Catechism*, and this was fitted only for older pupils. A *Bible History* published for Christian Sunday schools was used, the objectionable passages being expunged or pasted over. The following year the *Leeser Catechism for Younger Children* was issued, and Miss Simha Cohen-Peixotto published her *Bible Questions*. In 1840 the MS. of a rhymed catechism for the youngest children was presented to Miss Gratz by the author, Mrs. Eleazer Pyke, who, as Miss Rachel Cohen-Peixotto, had been a teacher in the school; and it was published the same year.

"An 'Infant Class,' for the oral instruction of children unable to read, was begun as an experiment by Miss Rebecca Moss in 1873. It has become a permanent feature."

"For twenty years Miss Gratz was Superintendent, Society and Constitution. In 1858 'The Hebrew Sunday School Society' was incorporated, Miss Gratz being elected the first president."

¹ The above facts, and the notes which follow, are taken from an Historical Sketch written by Dr. S. Solis Cohen, of Philadelphia, and published in the programme of the Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Hebrew Sunday School Society of America (1888).

Miss Gratz wrote in her report of 1838, concerning the opening of the Sunday school: "The Board have commenced their long-desired object of establishing a school for religious instruction to the children of the congregations residing in this city. It is not limited to any member or class of children; all who are hungry for the bread of life are welcome to the banquet; all who desire to read the Scriptures understandingly are invited to partake of instruction, given and received with reverence, and at no other charge than attention." Later was added this note: "This good work has already met with a reward. Our sisters of New York and Charleston, hearing of the success that has attended our attempt, and sensible that much good must result from early lessons of piety, have determined to establish similar institutions in their respective cities."

The late Rev. Dr. S. Morais makes the following statement, after referring to the opening of this school: "It has been stated that a Jewish Sunday school was previously started in Richmond, Va. This question, however, admits of some doubt, as the Hebrew Sunday school in Philadelphia has in its possession a tablet whereon it is precisely stated that the school in this city was the first in America. There were fifty children at its opening; in 1894 there were 1800¹."

Miss Gratz's school was not only the first free school but it was also the first to be conducted on lines similar to those followed in Christian Sunday schools.

Miss Sally Lopez (now in her ninety-fifth year), assisted by Miss Sarah C. Moise and by other ladies and a few gentlemen of the congregation *Beth Elohim*, organized the first Jewish Sunday school in Charleston, S. C., in 1838, after the destruction by fire of the old synagogue and before it was rebuilt. This school, still in existence, has been under the direct supervision of the rabbi since 1875. Mrs. Dinkins, to whom I am indebted for much valuable information, writes: "The great difficulty that

¹ Morais, *The Jews of Philadelphia*, p. 147.

the pioneers of this noble work had to contend against was the want of books, and they were forced to take Christian Sunday school catechisms which they scanned carefully, erasing the name of 'Christ,' 'Saviour' and all objectionable phrases. After a time Miss Lopez obtained, through Miss Gratz and Mr. Leaser, some books written or compiled by Miss Simha Peixotto, of Philadelphia, and these are still used in the primary classes. Death in her family brought responsibilities that forced Miss Lopez to resign her position. It was filled by Miss Penina Moise, and, after her, by others as willing and zealous. It is a cause for much satisfaction to all concerned, that even when the schism took place, due to a controversy over the introduction of an organ into the rebuilt synagogue, and resulting in the formation of a second congregation, *Shearith Israel*, the school was not abandoned nor was its harmony impaired, as some of the ablest workers were on one side, some on the other." At the close of the Civil War, the two congregations again became one, and the Sunday school continued uninterruptedly.

None of the carelessness which marred the early records of the others is evident in those of the Portuguese congregation of Richmond, Va. These were so well kept that they were offered in court as evidence during a controversy relative to the burying-ground, and it was while in the Court House that they were destroyed in the great conflagration that followed the evacuation of the city at the end of the Civil War, in April, 1865. The following facts, however, can be relied upon. A Sunday school, such as we now understand the term, was opened in 1839, as an adjunct of the Portuguese synagogue *Beth Shalome*, with two teachers, Miss Ellen Myers and Miss Emma Mordecai. The date 1839, given authoritatively by descendants of those connected with the original work, decides in Miss Gratz's favour the contention between Richmond and Philadelphia as to prior organization. Regardless of their rival claims to priority, it is evident that all three cities

were the pioneers in the good work, and in each one the movement was begun and personally conducted by women belonging to Portuguese congregations.

During the next ten or fifteen years many German-Jewish congregations sprang into existence throughout the United States, the great influx of Jews from the German and Austrian states during the "forties" and "fifties" having for the time being changed the aspect of American Judaism. One German congregation, born at that time, rose quickly to the leadership that it still maintains. Let Temple *Emanu-El*, of New York City, speak for itself:—

"Temple *Emanu-El* has ever appreciated the importance of religious education, and one of the objects of its organization was to enable the members to provide for the religious instruction of the rising generation. Accordingly, at the meeting held on May 4, 1845, the minister, cantor and sexton were required to take charge of the religious education of the children. Larger quarters were sought for school purposes, and the school committee was directed to report a comprehensive plan. It was agreed to open the religious school on June 2, 1845¹."

"It will surprise many to hear that, as early as 1846, an effort was made by the Jews of New York to establish schools for the Jewish children of the community. Yet such was the case, for we find that, on March 22, 1846, a conference was held between the directors of *Emanu-El* congregation and a committee from the *Talmud-Torah* and Hebrew Institute with this object in view. The directors, however, looked upon the project as impracticable, and therefore discountenanced it²."

"Steps were also taken for the reconstruction of the elementary school, and on October 18, 1848, under the superintendence of Dr. Merzbacher, assisted by a number of teachers, it once more sprang into existence. By dint of

¹ Myer Stern, *History of Temple Emanu-El*, pp. 19-20.

² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

great exertion, it was kept up until the year 1854, when overwhelmed by insurmountable difficulties, the undertaking was abandoned. In its place a religious school was instituted, and the Sabbath and Sunday were set apart as days devoted to such instruction¹."

"The attention of the congregation (1857) was next turned to the school of religion, which was but poorly attended. It was very deficiently supplied with school-books in the English language, which were the only ones that the children could understand properly. A *Bible History*, abridged from Emanuel Hecht's manual, and a *Guide to Religious Instruction for Jewish Children*, were drawn up, and arrangements were made for their translation into English²."

The early history of the Temple *Emanu-El* religious school is practically the history of almost every congregational school established earlier than twenty-five years ago. The newer congregations have, of course, been able to profit by the experiences and the mistakes made by their older sisters; and many which have been organized in recent years have had from the beginning fairly successful, modern Sunday schools. But the Temple *Emanu-El* school is not the oldest in New York; that of the Spanish-Portuguese congregation (*Shearith Israel*) was organized under the name of the "Polonies Talmud-Torah School," in the year 1808, to which was added twenty years later a "Society for the Education of Poor Children." This school, however, was a day school, in which English branches received as much attention as matters Jewish. It was not until the Rev. H. S. Jacobs, in 1874, became the preacher of the congregation that a Sunday school, as such, was introduced.

In addition to the honour of its being the birth-place of Miss Gratz's school, Philadelphia has earned first rank in

¹ Myer Stern, *History of Temple Emanu-El*, p. 29.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

another direction. The congregation *Rodeph Shalom*, one of the first established by Ashkenayzim, and now preparing to celebrate its one hundredth anniversary, has the following note in its minute-book :—

“At the meeting of the Board of Directors of *Rodeph Shalom* congregation, held January 3, 1841, a committee was appointed to engage the Rev. Dr. Solomon as orator, and to preach, and to superintend the Sunday school.” The wording of this minute leads to the assumption that the Sunday school was in existence prior to this time. On January 10, 1841, three school directors were appointed.

The limitations of a magazine article prevent even mention of the many Sunday schools which now form so important a part of the Jewish life of hundreds of our American towns scattered throughout the length and breadth of the United States; suffice it to say that the work of a few earnest women in Philadelphia, Charleston and Richmond originated the present widespread Sunday school movement. The secular congregational school could not thrive on American soil, and our congregational fathers soon recognized that fact. In this country we are not Jews first and Americans afterwards; we are American Jews, imbibing loyalty to our country in our American schools and under American influences, and drawing our Jewish sentiment from family tradition and congregational life. An exclusively Jewish training imparted by foreign-born Jews could never have made the children of these and other foreign Jews real Americans. Yet the abandonment of the Jewish secular school would have menaced the fate of American Judaism, had not some form of Jewish religious training been substituted for it, for the benefit of the Jewish children who were being educated in American schools. The afternoon Hebrew classes came first; these in turn made way for the Sunday school, to which in some places a Saturday session was added.

The curricula have been many and varied. Sometimes, and in some places, the sole instruction given was in reading

and translating Hebrew ; then a certain amount of catechism was added, and later came scriptural history. In my day as a child, and in the congregation of which my father was a member, we were confirmed at twelve, having completed a question-and-answer course of instruction, which started with Creation and ended with the death of Moses. To-day, in all congregations where real thought is displayed in Sunday school management, the age of confirmation is fifteen, and confirmants are required to have a fair knowledge not alone of the Bible history, but also of post-biblical history. But with the extension of the course in history has come a curtailment of the work in Hebrew. In many of the largest and most prosperous Sunday schools in the United States, the study of the Hebrew language has been abolished, with the result that Jewish boys and girls of fifteen are often able to read Latin, Greek, French and German, but cannot do as much as "spell out" the *Shema*.

In 1864, in order to counteract the proselytizing influence of certain Protestant mission schools established in the heart of a section of New York City, inhabited largely by Jews of the poorer classes, the Hebrew Free School Association was organized and incorporated. It differed in its function from the parochial schools of America, and from the Jews' schools of London, mainly in the facts that no secular instruction was given, and that no child could be admitted to one of its classes unless at the same time a regular attendant at one of the city's public schools¹. The sessions were arranged to complement public school hours. Instruction was given in Hebrew and in Jewish History and Ethics, and incidentally, manners, morals and American customs were inculcated. The number of pupils in these schools has for years averaged

¹ For the benefit of English readers it is necessary to explain that in America a public school is a free school, tolerating no kind of sectarian instruction, resembling the English Board School to a certain degree, but differing from it in being patronized by children from every stratum of social life.

between five and six thousand per year. Within the past year the work of the Hebrew Free School Association has become merged in that of the Educational Alliance, and the religious training of the children is under the control of the Committees on Moral Culture and Education of the latter society, the direct instruction being given by two principals, each assisted by a corps of paid teachers. This work is carried on in that section of the city, by common acceptance, termed the ghetto. Several other cities in the United States have a system of Hebrew free schools, in the main like those of New York City, but a history of each would make this article unduly long.

Just when, how and by whom the ceremony of confirmation was first introduced into American Jewish Sunday schools is not authoritatively stated, but in New York City this innovation was due to Temple *Emanu-El*. "On October 11, 1847, the annual confirmation of boys and girls was resolved upon by the congregation. The first confirmation took place on the following *Shebuoth*¹." In Richmond, Va., the first confirmation took place on July 4, 1852, the class consisting of two confirmants.

The use of proper books in Jewish Sunday schools has been a matter of concern since the days when those indefatigable Jewesses in Philadelphia, Richmond and Charleston erased objectionable passages from Christian manuals. The last few years have brought about a change, and better material is now available. But after all, it is the teacher behind the book, just as it is the man behind the gun, on whom depends defeat or victory. In many schools, libraries have grown up, and children have ready access to good books. Unfortunately, good Jewish books for children are rare; the Jewish Publication Society has put forth two or three volumes, but these are not sufficiently interesting to create in the child a desire to read more of the kind. The librarian of a finely-equipped library, in probably the best Jewish Sunday school I have

¹ Myer Stern, *History of Temple Emanu-El*.

ever visited, told me this story: A child applied for *John Halifax, Gentleman*: the book was out. The librarian said so, adding, "But here is another book by the same author." The child picked it up—it was *Hannah*—and laid it down again with the remark, "I don't want that; the name sounds too Jewish!"

Surely, surely! herein lie both a lesson and a warning! We have learned or borrowed from our friends of an alien faith so much of what is good in our present Sunday school system; can we not also learn from their practices how to give our little ones a taste for Jewish religious literature? The gladness with which my own Sunday school class welcomed and read Abrahams' little volume on Jewish Literature showed me very plainly that the taste can be developed, and the appetite whetted if skilful pens will but furnish the material to gratify them.

Before leaving the question of reading-matter, let me record four attempts made here in America to provide a juvenile magazine for Jewish children.

In 1871, the late Mr. Louis Schnabel, then Superintendent of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York, began the publication of a monthly, *Young Israel*. It was published for about five years, when for financial reasons the publication was discontinued.

The first Sunday school paper, the *Hebrew Sabbath School Companion*, was published in New York in 1872 by the late Adolph L. Sanger, Esq., the Rev. Dr. A. S. Isaacs and Mr. Morris S. Wise. It lived only one year, dying of financial starvation.

The Sabbath School Visitor was started in Cincinnati in 1874 by the Rev. Dr. Max Lilienthal. It was edited successively by Dr. Lilienthal, Dr. Voorsanger, Dr. K. Kohler, Mr. Isidore Wise and Dr. D. Philipson. It lived somewhat longer than its predecessors, but its ultimate end in January, 1894, was but "the common fate of all."

Early in 1896, recognizing how far behind our Christian friends we Jews are in providing proper ethical reading for

children of our own faith, two active members of the New York section of the Council of Jewish Women made the next attempt to provide a paper on lines similar to those adopted in all Protestant Sunday schools, and *Helpful Thoughts* made its appearance. Associated with these two women (Mrs. Kohut and the writer of this article) as co-editor was Prof. Richard Gottheil, who was eventually succeeded by the Rev. Dr. M. H. Harris. The editors are satisfied with the progress and the influence of their little magazine, but the publisher is dissatisfied with the financial returns and the indifference to it displayed by most Sunday school authorities. It is very likely that in a few years *Helpful Thoughts* may go the way of all Jewish juvenile periodicals; a sad commentary upon the mistaken and short-sighted policy of Jewish Sunday school boards.

The evolution of the American Jewish Sunday school has now been set forth. Its origin represents the impulse of a few earnest thinkers; its growth has been slow, oftentimes most unsystematic; by degrees new customs have been introduced and new demands have crowded out the habits and traditions of centuries; far too often it has been controlled and shaped by people who understood neither the nature of children nor the nature of Judaism; but being here it is bound to stay, having in the rush and hurry of American life proved its right to continued existence.

In 1862, Israel Joseph Benjamin, a German-Jewish traveller, wrote in his *Drei Jahre in Amerika* that "the Jewish school-system has not yet reached its desired development," and notwithstanding the remarkable forward strides since then, the candid critic and honest chronicler in 1900 must repeat that statement, for our schools have not even yet reached the desired development. In isolated cases we occasionally find a fine school, but this is the exception. Most of our Sunday schools are still enslaved by traditions, hampered by the blundering zeal of those who mean so well and do so badly, and by the lack of co-operation on the part of the parents. But this belongs to

THE PRESENT.

To attempt a statistical record of the present condition of our schools would invite disappointment. From time to time this attempt has been made, but in no case is the record complete. The task was undertaken by Dr. K. Kohler, of New York, during his editorship of *The Sabbath Visitor*; later, statistics were gathered by the Hebrew Sabbath School Union; a third effort was made by the present writer as the Chairman of the Committee on Religious School Work of the Council of Jewish Women¹. Not one of these records was complete or wholly accurate. There are certain facts, however, that are undeniable. The United States possesses to-day hundreds of congregational schools, a large number of free schools, and many so-called mission schools. The latter are supported by voluntary effort and contributions, the free schools by incorporated societies. The number of pupils attending all these schools cannot be less than thirty thousand; it is probably nearer the fifty thousand mark, and possibly may be still higher. Less creditable is the statement that many thousands of Jewish children are growing up in our large communities absolutely untaught on religious lines. Many, too many, of these are the children of the poor living in the overcrowded tenement sections; but alas! far from few is the number of those whose parents, Jews by birth and association, have cut themselves off voluntarily from all synagogue influences, and care not that their children are growing up little better than civilized pagans.

What is the duty of the congregation toward such children, with parents having the means but not the inclination to attach themselves to a synagogue? Because the parents will not, must we say to the children, "You may not"? Have Sunday school authorities the right to

¹ See report of the Convention of 1896, published by the Jewish Publication Society.

visit the iniquities of the parents upon the children, even to the first generation?

It is the old vexatious question; and they offer the old apology, "We cannot afford it." The handsome synagogue building encumbered by an enormous mortgage; the high-salaried rabbi, cantor, organist, soloists and sexton; a corps of paid Sunday school teachers; lighting, heating and repairs: these tax our congregations, not to the uttermost, but in many cases far beyond the point of prudent financiering. Only two congregations in New York City are free from debt; and the same tale is told of nearly every other Jewish community here in the States. This has a most unreligious influence upon all congregational deliberations. Time which should be devoted to discussing vital religious issues is spent in trying to solve the unsolvable problem of making a small income cover a larger expenditure. Men are selected to serve on congregational boards not for their learning, nor their piety, nor their true Jewish characteristics, but for their financial ability either to help pay expenses, or to devise means for meeting monetary obligations. Such men, not intentionally, but unknowingly, interfere with the spiritual advance of Judaism, and their inability to comprehend religious needs is the cause of much lack of progress in congregational schools.

Such financiering results in the erection of beautiful buildings "with all the modern improvements," including a heavy mortgage; and the question of how to meet the quarterly interest on the mortgage is of more moment than religious progress or spiritual development. "We cannot afford it" is responsible for the presence of inferior teachers in many schools, and for the lack of professionally trained teachers in all schools; "we cannot afford it" shuts children of indifferent parents out of the congregational schools; "we cannot afford it" causes many thousands of poor Jewish children to be excluded from all the good influences a proper religious training might give them; "we cannot afford it" prevents the adoption of proper juvenile Jewish

literature in the schools. Some day, perhaps, we may hope to see our congregations in the hands of those who will say, "We cannot afford to leave undone a single thing which will strengthen the influence of the synagogue, no matter what it costs!" but that day is still far off.

The Sunday school of to-day is a matter of pride to one who remembers the school of twenty years ago. The teachers, to-day, are mainly Americans by birth; and if they know less of Hebrew Scripture and Talmud than did the foreigners who taught us a generation ago, they know more of children and children's needs. All of the congregations that can afford the expense are now employing only paid teachers in the Sunday schools. This plan has two distinct advantages: it enables school boards to secure the services of professionals, and it provides an excuse for dispensing with the services of incompetent volunteers, who in far too many cases proved that their willingness to serve was their only qualification as teachers. Even these professional teachers are not professional save in a secular sense. They are proficient in neither Hebrew, Bible lore, Jewish ethics nor Jewish literature. Many have done wonders with their imperfect equipment. What might have resulted had there been added to their zeal and pedagogic skill a true and comprehensive, if not a scholarly, grasp of Judaism in all its bearings, is beyond computation.

Now and again, here and there, efforts are made to give to teachers in our religious schools a better training. Three distinct organizations are now working toward this end in three different ways: first and oldest the Hebrew Sabbath School Union; then the Jewish Chautauqua Society; and a recent arrival in the field, the National Committee on Religious School Work of the Council of Jewish Women. In the larger communities, there have been organized local Religious School Unions; in smaller towns, the rabbi often calls together the teachers of his school for instruction. All these things help and help much; but attendance is not compulsory, and until congregational boards refuse to

accept services, whether voluntary or paid, from young men or women not trained to such sacred work, so long will the already good teacher be the only one ready to profit by these advantages, and the poor, indifferent or self-sufficient one will continue to turn his or her back upon all such opportunities, and remain to the end incapable and inefficient. When school boards will accept only certificated teachers of religion, then and then only will all teachers qualify for certificates.

Since reference has been made to the three organized movements which are striving to aid religious teaching, a short sketch of the aims of each may not be out of place.

The Hebrew Sabbath School Union of America was organized in the city of Cincinnati, in July, 1886. The constitution adopted at that meeting stated the object of the new organization to be "to provide a uniform system for all Hebrew Sabbath schools in the United States, by promulgating a uniform course of instruction and by training competent teachers." The Union was the first attempt at concerted action in the interest of the religious schools of the country. Its chief activity has lain in the publication of text-books for the classes and guides for the aid of teachers. The following publications have been issued under its auspices: *A School Edition of the Proverbs*, by A. and I. S. Moses; *Selections from the Psalms*, by M. Mielziner; *The Ethics of the Hebrew Scriptures*, by A. and I. S. Moses; *How to Organize a Sabbath School*, by Henry Berkowitz; and *A Guide for Sabbath School Teachers*; this last-named publication contains papers on Instruction in Biblical History, by K. Kohler; a Post-Biblical History, by B. Felsenthal; a Religio-moral Instruction, by David Philipson; and on the Teaching of Biblical History in Primary Classes, by E. N. Calisch. To these must be added two papers on allied themes, published in the proceedings of the meeting held by the Union at Louisville, Ky., in December, 1896, viz. one on the Instruction of Post-Confirmation Classes, by Joseph Stolz,

and the other on the Formation of Sabbath School Libraries, by Charles S. Levi. In the annual report of 1897-8 the Union published a "Plan of Instruction for Sabbath Schools"; this is a graded plan for eight years' instruction, six in the school proper and two in post-confirmation work. The plan also includes directions for the instruction in normal classes organized with the view to the training of Sabbath school teachers. Possibly the most marked feature of the work of the Union has been the publication during the past three years, at regular intervals of a fortnight or a month, of leaflets in biblical history and religion. This work was undertaken at the suggestion and upon the initiation of the president, Dr. David Philipson. The leaflets were intended primarily for use in such localities as had no regularly trained teachers. It was also hoped that by the aid of the leaflets, schools might be organized in small towns in which there are but few Jewish families living, not enough to form a congregation. This hope has been partly realized. The leaflets have proved of great assistance to many earnest men and women who have formed schools in the small cities. Two series of twenty numbers each in biblical history have been published, the first series extending to the death of Joseph and the second to the death of Moses. During the current year the Union is issuing monthly leaflets in religion; thus far the following have appeared: *The Love of God, Our Love for God, The Story of Chanukah, Truth Speaking, Love and Respect for Parents*. The Union has also been active in gathering statistics of the Sabbath schools of the country, and its last two annual reports contain, in tabulated form, statistical information regarding the schools, the number of children attending, the number of classes, the superintendent, &c. The Union has its seat in Cincinnati, includes in its membership about seventy-five schools, and meets biennially at the same time with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

The Jewish Chautauqua Society was called into existence

by the Rev. Dr. Henry Berkowitz, Rabbi of Congregation *Rodeph Shalom* of Philadelphia. The Chautauqua System of Education is of American birth, and of the same age as her English cousin "The University Extension System." The methods of popularizing knowledge to which the name Chautauqua has come to be universally applied, have been adapted to the sphere of Jewish readings. "Home Reading Courses" are provided for individuals or Chautauqua Circles either as independent organizations, or connected with schools, congregations, Young Men's Hebrew Associations, the various sections of the Council of Jewish Women, and the Lodges of the Secret Fraternity, Independent Order of *B'nai B'rith*. There is an introductory two years' course, called "The Young Folks' Reading Union." It supplies the needs of the post-confirmation classes of our religious schools. A new and improved plan for this department has been recently prepared. In order to remove the irksomeness of class-drill, interesting programmes of exercises, with debates, essays, music, &c., are prepared, based on the assigned readings in Jewish history and Jewish literature, interspersed with poems and selections from English fiction bearing on these topics. At the close of the course, those who have complied with certain requirements in the nature of a test become the recipients of a certificate issued by the Jewish Chautauqua Society. A four years' course in Bible Study follows, and likewise entitles the reader to a certificate. A guide for two years' readings, called the "Open Bible," has been prepared by the Chancellor of the Jewish Chautauqua Society, Dr. Henry Berkowitz. The text-books are *The Bible for Home Reading*, by Claude G. Montefiore, Esq., and *A Literary Study of the Bible*, by Prof. R. G. Moulton. The third year's course is on *The Minor Prophets*, edited by Mr. D. W. Amram, of Philadelphia. The fourth year's syllabus is in preparation. There are a number of special courses in Post-Biblical Jewish History, with excellent guides in pamphlet form, prepared by Prof. Richard Gottheil, of Columbia University,

and a later period prepared by the Rev. Dr. M. H. Harris, of Temple *Israel*, New York. Eventually the whole ground of Jewish history will be covered. These courses are arranged with such simplicity as to bring them within the range of the abilities of the general reader, but through carefully selected bibliographies of "Recommended Readings" the more advanced student also finds them of great service. For any one of these Chautauqua Courses a nominal enrolment fee of fifteen cents is required from each reader, or ten cents from each member of circles of ten. The Society is maintained by the dues from annual members paying one dollar or upwards. The General Chautauqua takes its name and inspiration from the Summer Assembly held on the banks of the beautiful Chautauqua Lake in New York State. More than fifty similar Chautauqua Assemblies in various parts of the United States conduct summer meetings, in which it is sought to make "of pleasure a wise pursuit, and of study a pleasant pastime." The Jewish Chautauqua Society has held three successful Summer Assemblies. Excellent programmes have been provided, and hundreds attend from all sections of the land. The ablest Jewish teachers, ministers, and communal leaders have participated, so also have some Christian leaders of note. Women have taken a prominent part in these meetings. Much enthusiasm has been aroused. The most significant result of the gatherings is the work of "The Teachers' Institute"—a sort of summer normal training-class for the teachers in Jewish religious schools of the United States. The practical problems of the class-room here receive earnest consideration in discussions led by competent and experienced educators. Illustrative or practice lessons are also given to classes of pupils, in Jewish history, ethics, Hebrew and kindred themes, followed by a discussion of the matter, manner and method of instruction. A conference of directors, superintendents and teachers of religious schools was a prominent feature of the last assembly, July, 1899,

and an exhibit of Sabbath school appliances, such as models, charts, maps, &c., was made. Altogether the Jewish Chautauqua Society is contributing a notable force of practical and useful influences which are doing much to vitalize religious education among the Jews of America. Its pamphlet reports of the summer sessions, and full descriptions of the reading courses, are sent free on application to P. O., Box 825, Philadelphia.

The Council of Jewish Women does its work through its three general committees on philanthropy, religion (for adults) and religious school work. The National Committee on Religious School Work consists of five members who are specially charged to study and introduce into Sunday school work the most advanced methods and reforms, to raise the standard of teaching and of teachers, and to attempt to bring every Jewish child in touch with Jewish teachings. Each section of the Council, and there are now more than fifty, has its local committee on Religious School Work, whose duty it is to carry out as far as possible the suggestions of the National Committee, and to bring about better Jewish conditions among the children immediately under its control. Under the direction of these committees, mission classes have been established in many of the sections. Many hundreds, possibly some thousands, of Jewish children are now receiving religious instruction, who but for the work of these Council women would never have been reached. In small communities, notably where there is no synagogue or possibly only a small Russian congregation, the Council classes represent the first attempt ever made to give these American-born Jewish children class instruction in religion. The special reforms towards which the Council is bending its best efforts are: (a) the placing of every Jewish child in a class where religious instruction is given; (b) the raising of the age of confirmation; (c) the improving of Sunday school methods; (d) attention to the proper physical conditions in the buildings used for Sunday school purposes, notably sani-

tation, lighting, heating, ventilation and furniture; and (e) the placing of competent women on Sunday school committees. Advance has been made along all these lines, but the future still holds tremendous possibilities hidden within its folds.

The Religious School Unions have attempted much, but as yet the net result is not very brilliant. Some of them were organized with the hope of eventually developing into a training-school for religious school teachers, a hope that will never be realized until congregations require their teachers to hold Union certificates. When they do this, then the next step, the establishment of an endowed Normal Training School for Teachers of Religion, will be comparatively easy.

It has already been stated that the curricula in our schools are many and varied, but, generally speaking, graded schools are the rule. In some instances the ground covered by the work of the school is limited in quantity and even more limited in quality; in others more work is attempted and a certain amount of real good accomplished; in most of them too much attention is given to unimportant details and too little to the development of Jewish ideals. This is particularly true in schools where the committee in charge consists of men who only vaguely comprehend the lofty spiritual possibilities of a well-planned school. The Council of Jewish Women has been of great service here also. In many sections they have succeeded in having one or more of their women placed upon the local Sunday school board, and in every such case where their petition to the heads of the congregations met with success, the result has been most gratifying. America is producing a large number of capable women who have the desire to aid in any attempt toward developing a better Judaism, as well as the leisure to give their services to the cause. Such women cannot fail to better present conditions, and only the short-sighted or bigoted refuse to avail themselves of such excellent help.

In some congregational schools Hebrew is taught to all the children, in others it is an optional study, and in still others it is not taught at all. In none of the reform congregations has the result been encouraging, for proficiency in Hebrew is rare amongst American children. It is hardly more than fair to state that the largest number of our well-taught, well-attended schools are to be found among those where instruction in Hebrew has been abolished, or where it is an optional study. In the great Hebrew Free Schools of New York, Philadelphia, Newark, and also in certain other cities, somewhat better results have been gained in the teaching of the Hebrew language. But it must be noted that the pupils of these schools are mainly foreign-born, or children of foreigners of recent immigration.

Until recently text-books for instruction in Biblical History and in Hebrew were of poor quality and most unsatisfactory in other respects. The last few years have wrought some improvement, but excellent publications are still rare. However, it must be admitted, the book is not absolutely essential; after all is said and done, it is the teacher, not the book, that is responsible for the results. A good teacher with a bad book is more to be desired than a bad teacher with the best book that could be compiled; some day, let us hope, we shall see the ideal combination of the good book in the hand of the good teacher.

Regular sessions are held on Sunday mornings from September to June. In many places the hours are from nine to twelve. A few school boards have recognized that a session of three consecutive hours devoted to the same line of thought is pedagogically wrong, and in one or two places the school does not assemble until 9.30. About thirty minutes of each session is devoted to a general assembly, when some form of service or special exercises are held. Usually the rabbi or superintendent or some invited guest delivers a sermonette at these assemblies.

Many of the schools where Hebrew is taught hold a session on Saturday morning one hour earlier than the

regular synagogue service. Others hold this additional session on some afternoon during the week.

A few congregations have separate buildings in which the Sunday school work is done, but the general rule is to use the basement of the synagogue for the purpose. In building a synagogue, special attention is now given to the plan for the basement, and almost all of the newer buildings contain fine class-rooms, and an auditorium or assembly-room where from two to three hundred children can be well seated. Few of our Congregational schools register more than three hundred pupils. Occasionally these Congregational schoolrooms are placed at the disposal of the Council of Jewish Women for mission class purposes, always, of course, with the proviso that the sessions do not conflict. Our public school buildings are never used for sectarian teaching. The policy of our country is ever to separate State and Church, and any application for the use of schoolrooms for Congregational purposes, even though accompanied by an offer to pay rental for such use, would be promptly denied.

The prize and award system prevails in most of our schools. This is neither the time nor place for a discussion of the benefits or injuries that accrue to children from prize distributions. Personally I am opposed to all prize-giving; but in religious work there can be no justification for making use of material incentives, of themselves begetting feelings foreign to godliness, to put it mildly, as a substitute for that high sense of duty to be done toward man and toward God.

The custom of confirmation obtains in all our reform congregations. In most places, the standard of confirmation is now set fairly high, much study on the part of the child and its special preparation by the rabbi being generally demanded. The rite of confirmation is given in public in the synagogue on the first day of Pentecost. The services are beautiful and impressive, but to those to whom Jewish ideals are dear, there comes year after year the feeling

that elaborate attire and extravagant gifts form far too important features in what should be the most solemn hour in a child's life. The custom, too, of singling out one or two of the confirmants to offer up in public a carefully memorized prayer, written by the rabbi, is productive of much vainglory, envy, and ill-feeling, and in no wise aids our holy cause. Children are eligible to confirmation in some places at the age of thirteen, in others at fourteen, in a few at fifteen. I have heard that one congregation in the West has raised the age requirement to sixteen. I hope the report is true, and I hope still more earnestly that sixteen, and in time perhaps eighteen, may become the minimum age of confirmation throughout the land. The years from fourteen or fifteen to eighteen are the critical years in a child's religious development. It is then that he or she, particularly he, needs the most careful guidance and instruction. Too young to work out his or her own spiritual salvation, too young to be entrusted with the task of passing on to others what he or she has learned, yet not too young to begin to have a wonderful confidence in his or her own opinions, it is not uncommon to find our boys and girls, soon after confirmation, first absenting themselves from synagogue service, and then drifting into the indifference and apathy which here in America is religion's most menacing foe. In many places, an effort is being made to retain influence over these children by the formation of post-confirmation classes. These efforts are not entirely successful. As attendance is optional and the parents not interested, only a small number of the confirmants return at all, and many of these eventually drop out. However, some good work along these lines is being done, and the future looks a bit more hopeful.

Most Sunday schools are controlled, in addition to the school board, by a principal, or a superintendent, or both. Where only one officiates, it is invariably the rabbi, and here is one reason why our Sunday schools have not reached their best development. The rabbi is rarely a pedagogue,

and far more rarely either an organizer or an executive ; then too he is often called away to officiate at funerals or to perform other rabbinical duties. In a few of the schools a layman stands at the head in addition to the rabbi ; usually a volunteer, he brings to his work much zeal and earnest endeavour, extreme conscientiousness and a lofty purpose ; but to be added to these high qualifications, or, strictly speaking, to be subtracted from them, are his total ignorance of pedagogy, of school organization and of the history of education, yielding that weak result that is ever the inevitable sequence of "not knowing how." Rarely, unfortunately so rarely that he proves an exception, is a recognized educator, who is also a good Jew, placed at the head of a religious school. In such instances the result is indeed most gratifying.

But the present need of the schools is a need greater even than that of trained teachers, good textbooks, a uniform curriculum, intelligent school boards, an advance in the age of confirmation and experts for superintendents. It is a need that cries aloud, for parents who will take an interest in the child's progress in the religious school, who will realize that religion in the home is essential to the child's spiritual growth. Such parents exist, but in the same ratio as ideal teachers. If the inferiority of the Sunday school of twenty years ago may be wholly or even only partly responsible for the ignorance in religious matters of so many of the parents of to-day, it is not unreasonable to infer that the relative excellence of the schools of the present will produce a more thoughtful, a more religiously-intelligent parenthood in the years to come. However this may be, such is the hope that quickens and encourages our efforts in the face of present disappointment, and such is the prayer that underlies and animates every onward attempt made by the best and most earnest teachers in our midst.

THE FUTURE.

It is predicted that the United States during the twentieth century is destined to play a part in the development of Jews as important as that of mediaeval Spain and Germany. If this prediction refer merely to the special development of Jewish science by a limited number of scholars and students, its realization, although gratifying, is not vital; but if it refer to the general religious development of the main body of American Jews, then will its realization depend to a great extent upon the character and influence of the instruction given in our Sunday schools. The schools of to-day are accomplishing something, they may be accomplishing comparatively much; for in the face of many obstacles and much indifference they are arousing in the children a desire for better things; and through the children, influences for good are gradually working their way into many homes. What manner of school must be maintained in the future, if these precious influences are to be vitalized?

Each congregation must exert every means to support a well-graded school, in rooms or in a building well-ventilated, well-lighted, hygienically beyond criticism, furnished with proper regard to the physical needs of pupils, and decorated with pictures and banners, &c., attractive to the eye and ethically or historically impressive. At the head of this school there must be a man or woman of high character, of strong personal influence, of professional skill as an organizer, and inspired by noble Jewish ideals. The rabbi and his spiritual influence must pervade the whole atmosphere; he must have no specific duties in the way of teaching or supervising (unless, possibly, the control of the confirmation class), for he must be free to go about from class to class, giving from his store of knowledge to teacher and to pupil, extending inspiration, sympathy, advice, and all those other aids which serve to eliminate all sense of drudgery from the high art of teaching. He must visit other schools of different denominations, to

cull from them suggestions or encouragement for his own ; above all, he must seek to link school influences with the home, not by public preaching to parents in general, but by personal, pastoral calls upon the individual, showing to each indifferent father, to each careless or thoughtless mother, the heavy responsibilities of parenthood, until at last he wins that judicious co-operation on their part that is so absolutely essential. Think you such functions are unimportant or belittle the rabbi ? To my mind such work must lead steadily to a strengthening of faith, and surely this is the rabbi's lofty mission. Pulpit eloquence has its merits, but pulpit eloquence is in itself not always a sufficient strengthener of faith ; and without strong faith, to what future can Judaism, or any other creed, look forward ?

Under the superintendent's control there must be a corps of consecrated teachers, voluntary or paid, according to varying conditions and circumstances ; but specially trained and specially called. I know of no crime against religion more serious than that of entrusting its teaching to one who loves not the work, and who neither comprehends what is expected, nor is in sympathy with the children. Unfortunately, the crime is not uncommon, but in the school of the future it must not be perpetrated.

Classes must be small, twenty pupils to each teacher should be the maximum. In the limited number of hours children devote to religious training, the teacher cannot obtain a personal insight into the character and the soul's needs of many pupils. To be a moral guide to each, to learn to know and sympathize with each child's weaknesses, is a teacher's best opportunity. That opportunity is denied her when too large a number of children divide her thoughts, her efforts, and her prayers. In the free schools and mission classes, the size of the class should be specially small. These children come mainly from homes where poverty and its attendant attributes interfere with the best moral development, and often the personal influence of the

teacher is possibly the only appreciable force at work for the betterment of existing conditions. That force must be utilized; but such utilization becomes a physical impossibility when one teacher is charged with the care of fifty or sixty pupils.

The curriculum in the school of the future must be broad, comprehensive and intelligent. It should begin with a kindergarten class, and continue through youth to early manhood and womanhood. Is this extreme? I know of a Unitarian Sunday school in New York that has a graded course of instruction covering a period of sixteen years. Are the history and literature and teachings of Judaism less vital or less interesting than those of Unitarianism?

The school boards must be composed of men and women who, in accepting the office, will consecrate their best efforts in this service of the Lord; men and women who will strive to bring about a change of heart among the trustees of the congregation; men and women who will try to convince and convert those responsible for errors and for the complete subordination of the school to the limitations of a financial policy that appropriates hundreds of dollars for choral music, and provides no money for the improvement of the congregational school, or towards the support of free schools or mission classes. Such men and women abound in every congregation, and it is time they were called to the front.

And last, but oh! how far, how very far from least, there must be thoughtful, prayerful, intelligent co-operation with and from the home. The religiously-indifferent father, the morally-thoughtless mother, where are their places in all these efforts to better spiritual conditions? What will be the last word in the moral development of a child who is taught in Sunday school that righteousness is the be-all and end-all of earthly effort; that to lie and to slander, to profane the Sabbath, and to gamble are sinful in the eyes of right-minded men and women, as well as in the

sight of God ; and who, leaving school, returns to a home where the father profanes the Sabbath and plays at cards for heavy stakes, and the mother devotes her life to gossip and frivolity ? Yet that child must be taught in the Sunday school to "honour thy father and thy mother !"

The religiously-indifferent, the morally-thoughtless, who shall organize a crusade against these ? Or, better still, who shall make such a crusade unnecessary ? It is my belief, it is my hope, it is my prayer, that such parents may be brought to realize how terrible is the harm wrought by their carelessness unto all Judaism, and that the greater part of them, once recognizing their mistakes, will voluntarily seek to mend their ways. To this task let all—the rabbi, the superintendent, the teacher, the worker, the thinker—bend every energy. Then let us hasten on the day of well-organized schools, specially-gifted superintendents, properly trained and God-inspired teachers, a wise curriculum, high-minded, purposeful school boards, and thoughtful, earnest, self-sacrificing parents. And when that day dawns upon every American congregation, the Jewish Sunday school movement in the United States will have reached its highest possible development.

JULIA RICHMAN.

APPENDIX.

CURRICULUM OF TEMPLE *ISRAEL* OF HARLEM (NEW YORK) RELIGIOUS SCHOOL.

Oral Class.—Bible stories from Genesis and beginning of Exodus taught orally. Commandments in brief. Simple prayers memorized.

Fourth Grade.—The Law : hygienic, religious, ethical, humanitarian laws of Pentateuch grouped. History to death of Moses. Ten Commandments. Calendar, Festivals, Holy Days. Longer prayers.

Third Grade.—History from the Conquest to Solomon. Some Psalms and Proverbs memorized.

Second Grade.—History from the Division to Fall of Northern Kingdom, taking up the corresponding prophets.

First Grade.—History from 720 to Malachi, taking up corresponding prophets. Selections from Job. Notes on Canon, Apocrypha. Text-book, Harris, *The People of the Book* (3 vols.).

NOTE.—A Bible text is taught with each chapter. Summaries of Bible books corresponding to each grade are taught in each class. Ethics are taught from the Bible lessons themselves.

POST-GRADUATE DEPARTMENT.

Graetz's *History of the Jews*, the text-book, with side references to other histories and literature. Period to be reached in each class not limited. May be continued for one, two or three years.

Chautauqua Syllabi on Post-biblical History and Literature introduced this year.

HEBREW DEPARTMENTS.

Classes in Spelling, Reading, Grammar, Simple Translation and Translation of Parts of the Pentateuch.

SCHOOL SESSIONS.

Sundays from 9 to 12, mornings: Hebrew (optional) from 9 to 10; Religion from 10 to 11.30; Children's service at 11.30 in the temple. Service consists of opening prayer, hymn, Scripture reading, a psalm in alternate responses, hymn, address, closing prayer.

CURRICULUM OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOL, AHAWATH CHESED SHAAR HASHOMAYIM, NEW YORK.

HISTORY.

First Year.—Creation to Joseph. No text-book used. The instruction, imparted in the form of simple narratives, has the aim to impress the child with the moral tenor of the stories.

Second Year.—Creation to Decalogue (inclusive). Text-book, *The People of the Book*, vol. I.

Third Year.—Pentateuch, Joshua and Judges. Text-book, *The People of the Book*, vol. II.

Fourth Year.—The two books of Samuel. Text-book, *The People of the Book*, vol. III. Bible Geography.

Fifth Year.—Kings, Prophets, Hagiographa. Bible Geography. Text-book, Deutsche's *Bible History*.

Sixth Year.—Post-biblical History.

N.B.—The Ten Commandments, Festivals and Ethics taught in all classes, with due consideration of the age and mental capacity of the pupils.

HEBREW (COMPULSORY).

First Class.—Consonants and vowels.

Second Class.—First Reading Exercises.

Third Class.—Reading Exercises and Translation of Words.

Fourth Class.—Reading. First elements in Grammar.

Fifth Class.—The Regular Verb. Translation of Hebrew Prayers.

CONFIRMATION CLASS.

Instruction in the cardinal tenets and principles of Israel's Religion.

CURRICULUM OF RELIGIOUS SCHOOL, *RODEPH
SHALOM*, PHILADELPHIA.

PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT (*Two Years*).—Instruction oral. Selected stories from Genesis; also stories about Ruth, Esther, Daniel, &c. The Commandments (simplified). Selections from Psalms, texts and appropriate prayers.

Third Year.—Life of Moses (instruction oral). Elementary lessons in Hebrew (*Union Prayer Book*). Bible Ethics: "Duties to others" (*The Bible Ethics*, Krauskopf and Berkowitz).

Fourth Year.—Book of Joshua (*The People of the Book*, Harris). Bible Ethics: "Duties to ourselves" (*The Bible Ethics*). Hebrew (*Hebrew Reader*).

Fifth Year.—Book of Judges (*People of the Book*). "Duties in general" (*The Bible Ethics*). Hebrew: Reading, Elementary Grammar and Translation.

Sixth Year.—Book of Kings. "Religious Duties." Advanced Hebrew Reading, Grammar, and Translation.

Seventh Year.—Kings (continued). "Our Religious Duties" (continued). Hebrew: Selections from the Prayer Book with translation.

Eighth Year.—Prophets to the time of Ezra (*People of the Book*, vol. III). Ethics: "Man and his Mission" (*The Bible Ethics*). Hebrew: Selections from Prayer Book with translation.

Ninth Year (Confirmation Class).—Festivals and ceremonials as the concrete practical expression of Jewish life. Principles and precepts.

All classes in the first eight years receive religious instruction through Sabbath worship, learning to participate in the same by singing of hymns, Hebrew responses, &c. A sermonette is delivered, and one period of the Sunday morning session is devoted to the discussion of the same with special reference to Midrashic teachings, &c., presented in the sermon. The two highest classes of the school and all the post-confirmation classes attend the regular adult services.

The *Tenth Year* (first of the post-confirmation class).—Organization of Young Folks' Reading Union Chautauqua Circle. First half of Lady Magnus' *History of the Jews* is read and discussed, with collateral reading, under leadership of competent teacher.

The *Eleventh Year*.—Second year's course of the Chautauqua Young Folks' Reading Union, Lady Magnus' *History of the Jews* completed, with collateral reading, discussion, &c.

The *Twelfth Year*.—Advanced studies in Post-biblical History, Chautauqua Circle following. Course-book arranged by Prof. Gottheil. These twelve years of graded work have been in actual operation in our school this year. To them we expect to add additional Circles advancing in regular order to cover the entire ground of Jewish history and literature, as arranged in the Chautauqua Courses. From the Confirmation class upwards all Circles unite on Sunday morning for a "Popular Assembly for Bible Study," conducted by Dr. M. Jastrow and Dr. Berkowitz. The basis of all the work in the "Rodeph Shalom Institute" is Bible study.

CURRICULUM OF *BETH EMETH* SUNDAY SCHOOL, ALBANY, N.Y.

First Year (age 6 years).—Creation to Abraham.

Second Year.—Creation to Death of Joseph (*S. S. Union Leaflets*).

Third Year.—Life of Moses (*S. S. Union Leaflets*).

Fourth Year.—Joshua, Judges, Ruth (*People of the Book*, Harris).

Fifth Year.—Samuel to Division of Kingdom (*People of the Book*, Harris).

Sixth Year.—Division of Kingdom to Captivity (*People of the Book*, Harris).

Seventh Year.—Return from Captivity to Jochanan ben Zakkai (*Post-biblical History*, Hecht).

Dr. Kohler's *Guide to Judaism* is used in Confirmation class. Ethical instruction is emphasized in all grades. Hebrew is an optional study: very little is accomplished in this branch.

CURRICULUM OF TEMPLE *EMANU-EL* SCHOOL, NEW YORK.

SYNOPSIS OF INSTRUCTION.

A.—Moral Instruction

is given in every class: 1st, By a study of the Biblical stories with especial reference to the moral principles involved; 2nd, By a graded

series of Biblical texts, referring to our moral duties, which the children memorize; 3rd, By inculcating the Ten Commandments with proper explanations; 4th, By practical work, in doing acts of kindness and charity.

B.—Religious Instruction.

In every class the principal tenets of the Jewish faith are expounded and the origin and significance of the Jewish ceremonies and festivals explained. This instruction is fitted by the teacher to the understanding of the children under his or her charge. In the Confirmation class a fuller exposition of Jewish faith and practice is given.

C.—Biblical Instruction.

CLASS VI (age 9 years).—THE PATRIARCHS.

<i>Biographical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Ethical.</i>
The Creation.	God as the Creator of the World.	
Adam and Eve.		Obedience.
Cain and Abel.	Beginnings of Worship.	Envy.
Noah and the Flood.	The Covenant of the Rainbow.	Righteousness.
Abraham.	Beginning of Jewish Faith. The promised land.	Obedience; kindness to strangers.
Isaac.		
Jacob.	Finding God—(Israel).	Consequences of deception.
Joseph.		Brotherly love; fidelity; magnanimity.

CLASS V (age 10 years).—THE MAKING OF THE NATION.

<i>Historical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Ethical.</i>
Moses.		
Life of the Israelites in Egypt.		
Mission of Moses.		
Flight of the Israelites from Egypt.	Sanctification of the people.	
The people in the wilderness.	Revelation. Decalogue.	Reverence for God, parents and superiors.
Israel at Mount Sinai.	Sabbath and Festivals (Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles).	Care for the afflicted.
Aaron.	First regulation of worship.	Compassion towards man and animals.

<i>Historical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Ethical.</i>
Moses' lack of faith.		
The Brazen Serpent.	Faith.	Lessons from the character of Moses; weakness, attachment to his people, sense of justice.
Division of the Land.		
Farewell of Moses.	Resignation.	
Joshua.		
Conquest of Canaan.	God's promise fulfilled	
Distribution of the Land.		

CLASS IV (age 11 years).—THE MAKING OF THE KINGDOM.

<i>Historical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Ethical.</i>
Deborah.		
Gideon.		
Ruth.		Faithfulness.
Samson.		Self-reliance.
Jephtha.		Danger of hasty promises.
Eli.	Faithfulness in service.	
Samuel.	Consecration to God.	Obedience.
Saul.		
David.	Jerusalem the seat of worship; Psalms.	Kindness to enemies; devotion to friends.
Solomon.	The building of the Temple.	Love of wisdom.

CLASS III (age 12 years).—(a) PURIFICATION OF THE NATION.

<i>Historical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Ethical.</i>
The Divided Kingdom.		
N. S.	Prophecy and the prophetic Ideals.	
Jeroboam I; Rehoboam.	Elijah and Elisha.	
Ahab; Uziah.		
Jeroboam II; Hezekiah.	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="font-size: 2em; vertical-align: middle; margin-right: 5px;">{</div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> Hosea. Joel. Amos. Jonah. </div> </div>	Humility in prosperity.
End of the Kingdom.	Manasse.	Jeremiah.
	Josiah.	
	End of the Kingdom.	

(b) THE NATION A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY.

<i>Historical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Ethical.</i>
The Babylonian Captivity.	Ezekiel.	The Rise of Judaism.
The return to Palestine.	Ezra and Nehemiah.	The beginning of the formation of the Canon.
		Synopsis of the books of the Bible.
		The beginnings of the Synagogue and synagogue worship. Influence of Persia upon religious belief.
The rebuilding of the Temple.	Purim.	

D.—Post-biblical Instruction.

CLASS II (age 13 years).—THE DISPERSION.

<i>Historical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Literary.</i>
Alexander's Conquest.	Judaism under Greek Influence.	Closing of the Canon ; Apocrypha.
Egyptian Rule.	Judaism under Ptolemies.	The Septuagint.
Syrian Rule.	The Priesthood.	Philo.
The Maccabean Uprising, and the Hasmonians.	Chanukka. Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes.	
Jewish Independence.		
Herod.	Sanhedrin and Synagogue.	Hillel, Shamai, Philo, Josephus.
Roman Rule over Judea.	Christianity.	
Destruction of the Second Temple.	The Zealots — The Rabbis.	Mishna.
Dispersion.		
Attempts to regain independence (Bar Cochba).	The Schools.	Akiba. Talmud. Jehuda Hanasi.
Jewish Life under the Caliphs (Gaonim).	Mohammedanism. The Karaites.	Saadia. Ibn Gabirol.
Condition of the Jews in Spain till 1150.		Rashi.

CLASS I (age 14 years).—MIDDLE AGES AND MODERN JUDAISM.

<i>Historical.</i>	<i>Religious.</i>	<i>Literary.</i>
Jews under Catholic Kings.		
The Inquisition.		Growth of Jewish Literature.
Jews in Central Europe.	The False Messiahs (Sabbathai Zevi, Frankists).	Poetry, history, philosophy, the sciences.
The Crusades.		
Jews in France.		
Life in Germany during the Middle Ages.		Reuchlin and the Talmud.
	Kabbalah and the Kabbalists.	Jehudah Hallevi — Maimonides.
		Menasse ben Israel.
		Uriel Acosta.
		Spinoza.
The Jews in Holland.		
	Development of Talmudism—the Schulchan Aruch.	Nachmanides; Ibn Ezra.
The Jews in England.	Sephardim and Ashkenazim.	Abravanel.
The French Revolution and the gradual emancipation of the Jews.	Beginnings of Reform. Orthodoxy; Conservatism.	Scientific Study of Jewish Literature.
		Mendelssohn.
		Lessing, Rieser.
		Zunz.
		Geiger.
Settlement and History of the Jews in America.		Holdheim.
		Frankel.
		Grätz.
		The Bible as a literary monument.

*D.—Hebrew Instruction (Optional)*¹.

In the class for beginners Katzenberg's *Hebrew Primer* is used as a text-book, the instruction being directed merely towards teaching the pupils to read Hebrew correctly. In the advanced class the *Union Prayer Book* and the Pentateuch are used, the pupils

¹ Less than ten per cent. of the school are in the Hebrew classes.

being taught translation into English. Sufficient grammar is taught to enable the children to understand the construction of simple Hebrew sentences.

CURRICULUM OF THE RELIGIOUS CLASSES OF THE EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE, NEW YORK.

(HEBREW COMPULSORY.)

Sixth Grade.

1. Alphabet and Spelling (Hebrew).
2. Morning and Evening Prayers and Blessings (English).
3. Ten Commandments, in brief (English).
4. Festivals, in brief (English).
5. Stories of Patriarchs, of Joseph, and Birth of Moses.

The Principal will supply each teacher with the exact work he or she desires for Items 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Biblical Stories are to be told only in the form of *narrative*. Teachers must make these narratives as interesting as possible, and should make every effort to encourage originality of expression on the part of the pupils who repeat these stories.

Review both biographically and chronologically.

Fifth Grade.

1. Hebrew Reading.
2. Prayers and Benedictions, and Shema, first part (Hebrew and English).
3. Festivals and Months (English).
4. Ten Commandments (English).
5. Review Stories of Sixth Grade, and continue to the death of Moses.

The Principal will assign the exact work he or she desires for Items 1, 2, 3 and 4. For 5, see note under Sixth Grade.

N.B.—Bible Stories are to be taught as far as possible with the aid of the map, so that pupils may be able to trace journeys, &c., geographically.

Fourth Grade.

1. Hebrew Reading, with simple rules.
2. Shema, completed; Ten Commandments (Hebrew and English).
3. Commandments with explanations; Festivals more fully explained.
4. Review Biblical Stories of Fifth and Sixth Grades.
5. Stories of Joshua, Judges¹ and Ruth.

See notes under Fifth and Sixth Grades.

¹ Pay special attention to Deborah, Gideon and Samson.

Third Grade.

1. Hebrew Reading and *Grammar*: Pronouns, persons, gender, prefixes and suffixes, and such rules as are necessary for a proper understanding of the translation.
 2. Translation of מה טבו, ברוך שאמר, לארץ, המאיר to end of שמנה עשרה.
 3. Review Commandments; Festivals and Months.
 4. Review Stories taught in the lower Grades.
 5. Stories of Creation (including first eleven chapters of Genesis). Eli, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Elijah and Elisha.
- See notes under Fifth and Sixth Grades.

Second Grade.

1. Hebrew—Reading and Translation of הכל יודוך, נשמת to end of שמנה עשרה. אז ישיר and הלל, the entire Sabbath afternoon service and שמנה עשרה for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.
 2. Translation from משפטים and קדושים and the first chapter of פרקי אבות (*Ethics of the Fathers*). Grammar: nouns and verbs.
 3. Explain the Jewish Calendar; Festivals; Creed of Maimonides (English).
 4. Review Biblical History of lower Grades.
 5. Stories of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jonah, Job, Daniel, Esther, the Maccabees, Ezra and Nehemiah.
- See notes under Fifth and Sixth Grades.

First Grade.

1. Reading and Translation from Leviticus xxiii and Exodus xvi; *Ethics of the Fathers*, chapters 2, 3 and 4.
2. Review Second Grade reading and translation.
3. *Confirmation Manual*.
4. Names and principal contents of the twenty-four Books of the Bible; explanation of the Apocrypha, works of Philo, Josephus and Talmud.
5. Review of all the Biblical Stories. Take a synopsis of post-biblical History, according to Hecht's book, up to the present time.